

Kent County Central Office

Newsletter

November 2021

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Note: Inclusion of articles and announcements in Central Office News does not constitute A.A or KCCO endorsement. Rather, members of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous have been encouraged to share their experience, strength and hope through this humble periodical. Opinions expressed are those of the writer unless otherwise noted. The Kent County Central Office makes these announcements solely as a service to the reader, not as an endorsement.

MISSION STATEMENT The mission of the Kent County Central Office Newsletter is to serve Kent County and the surrounding A.A. *community*, in four ways. 1. *To carry the A.A. message* 2. *To inform our readers.* 3. *To provide a forum for discussion of A.A. principles* 4. *To provide service work opportunities for A.A. members.* **Need to find a meeting? Go to the Website grandrapidsaa.org/meetings**

The Birthday Club

Mike W - 29 Jan 2004

Tom W - 30 Mar 1980

Ed B - 29 May 2010

Ben S - 5 Dec 1978

Sharron S 12 April 1984

Jim H - 5 Jul 2005

Anne S - 30 Aug 1981

Steve C - 14 Aug 2018

If you'd like your name, or that of someone you know, to appear on the Birthday Club list just donate an amount equal to your number of sober years. Your name and date will appear here all year.

If you want to get the KCCO newsletter send an email to KCCONewsletter@gmail.com include your email address

**KCCO desperately needs volunteers for the 24-hour AA hotline.
We need a one-month commitment of 4 hours every week.
Morning and afternoon shifts available.
Call Steve 616-913-9216**



God, direct my thinking, especially that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest, or self-seeking motives

GROUP DONATIONS

“Thank You” to all of the Groups who donated in October

AA On The Hill

Rockford AA

Breton Road Early Birds

Ionia Noon

AA In The Country

SJV Big Book Study

Open Dorr

SAC Fri Night Big Book Study

Lamont AA

Fri Morning Step

And all the individual donations that came in via PayPal too! We know many of these were from groups and if you'd like your group to be credited for these donations please call the office at (616) 913-9216.

FRIDAY NIGHT FUNDRAISER SPEAKER MEETING

LOCATION: THE NORTH ALANO CLUB

1020 College Ave, NE, Grand Rapids, MI (Lower Level Balcony)

Phone 616-456-5709

Or Join us on-line

Zoom Meeting ID: 811 8491 3007

Password: 1020

Friday, November 5, 2021, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Ryan M

Home Group: Iron Sharpens Iron Group

Friday, November 12, 2021, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Allen H

Home Group: Iron Sharpens Iron Group

Friday, November 19, 2021, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Doug P

Home Group: Iron Sharpens Iron Group

Friday, November 26, 2021, 7:00 pm

Speaker: Nick H

Home Group: Iron Sharpens Iron Group

Sponsored by Kent County Central Committee

4920 Plainfield NE, Suite 19, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

For any information call: 616-913-9216

Tips for Protecting Your Sobriety during the Holidays and Preventing Relapse

Tips for staying sober, preventing relapse and avoiding the holiday blues

'Tis the season of glad tidings and good cheer, but for people in recovery from drug or alcohol addiction, the holidays can be an especially trying time to stay healthy and sober.

Unrealistic expectations, over-commitment, unhealthy eating, financial strain and fatigue can fray emotions. Travel complications and busy schedules can add to the stress, as well. You might be spending your holidays away from your addiction recovery support system and sober routines, which can make you more vulnerable to relapse. Holiday customs, childhood memories and annual gatherings that are closely associated with drug or alcohol use can also tug at your emotions and put your recovery at risk.

But there are ways you can prepare for this challenging season and safeguard the greatest gift you've ever given yourself and those you love: Your sobriety. Here are seven practical tips to help you avoid relapse and stay sober during the holidays and beyond.

1. Have Sober Strategies in Place

Develop a plan to protect your sobriety ahead of any holiday event and activity that could potentially trigger relapse to substance abuse. This may mean going to a Twelve Step meeting before or after the event, attending the festivities with your sponsor or a sober friend, or making sure you can leave the gathering at any time and are not dependent on someone else for transportation. Your plan to stay sober could also include "bookending" the event with before-and-after telephone calls to someone in recovery. Feel empowered to limit your time in stressful situations or around difficult people—and always have an escape plan. Much of relapse prevention is having an awareness of the people, places or things that could trigger trouble and planning strategies for staying sober given those inevitable situations.

2. Adjust Your Attitude

Talk with your sponsor, a friend who understands addiction recovery, or a professional counselor about the emotions and expectations you have wrapped up in the holidays—especially if you find yourself replaying childhood experiences or memories during this time of year. This is called "calculating reality." Remember that your loved ones, coworkers and friends are probably feeling tired and stressed during the holidays, too. This realization alone will help you adjust your attitude, lower your expectations and be forgiving of yourself and others. Instead of showing up at a holiday event feeling on edge or defensive, orient your thinking to be open, accepting and positive: Ask yourself, what is the next right thing for me to do in this situation?

It's also important to be aware that some people in addiction recovery are vulnerable to substance abuse relapse *after* the holidays. The buildup of stress and resentment that might come with the holidays can lead to rationalizations, denial and relapse. In other words, we can convince ourselves that, considering what we've been through, we are entitled to drink or use. Sometimes, as alcoholics and addicts, we manage things better when we're in the midst of a crisis than afterwards. Remember, the disease of addiction is as powerful the day after a holiday as it is the day of and the day before. As we learn during addiction rehab and in the meeting rooms, recovery is a one-day-at-a-time endeavor, no matter the season.

3. Be of Service

The holidays offer powerful opportunities for spiritual growth by sharing your gratitude and joy with others. Connecting with others in this way can be a new experience that takes courage. But because you're in recovery from active addiction, you've already demonstrated the capacity for tremendous courage and change. So keep strengthening your recovery. Look for ways to be of service to others: Serve a meal at a homeless shelter, reach out with hospitality to a newcomer at a meeting, spend time with a neighbor who is confined. There are a million different ways to give back, pay it forward and be of service.

4. Be Mindful of What You're Drinking—and Thinking

At social gatherings, it might be helpful to always have a beverage in hand so people aren't constantly offering you a drink. When you order a beverage, pay attention to how it is being made. If you ask someone to get a beverage for you, he or she may not know your situation or might forget your request and bring you an alcoholic drink. If you accidentally pick up the wrong drink and swallow some alcohol, this doesn't mean you will automatically relapse. But watch for any rationalizations that could creep in: "Hmm, I guess I can handle alcohol in social situations after all. Perhaps my period of abstinence taught me how to control my drinking." Do not go down that road. Instead, tell someone who understands recovery from drug or alcohol addiction about your experience as soon as possible. A mistake is not a relapse—but it can lead to one if kept a secret.

6. Avoid Known Risks

If you know Aunt Lucy is going to grill you about rehab, avoid her. If Uncle Bob will try to mix you a stiff drink, stay away from him. If the office New Year's party is really all about drinking or other drug use, make a brief appearance or don't attend. It is unrealistic in all of these scenarios to say, "I can soldier through." That's what Step One of the Twelve Steps teaches us, right? *That we don't have the power.* So, why put yourself in the position of having to "power through" an obstacle course of relapse triggers? Staying sober and safeguarding your recovery must always come first.

6. Practice Self-care

Celebrate the holiday season and the fullness of your sober life by taking time for yourself. Proper nutrition, gentle exercise and restorative sleep can do wonders for your well-being. The better you feel physically, the stronger you will be emotionally. Nourish your spirit, too, through personal reflection and connection with those you love. Find some quiet time each day for relaxation and meditation—if only for a few minutes, no matter how busy you are. Let your spirit be your guide.